

Remarks upon the London Gazette, relating to the Straights-Fleet and the Battle of Landen in Flanders.



THE Penner of this Intelligence has for some time written with such an unusual range of Fancy, as if his Design was rather to Entertain and Amuse, than inform his Reader. To do him Justice, he seems to be not only a Master of Style, but of the Matter he treats about; for he makes no difficulty to conceal, displace and perplex Things at Discretion. So that an ordinary Observer must be oftentimes at a loss to know how the World goes. His peculiar Talent is to lessen a Disadvantage, and make it invisible. It may be he appears with this Sanguine Air, because he is unwilling to put us to pain with unacceptable Truths. But how much soever he may be commended for his Temper, it would in all likelihood be better for us if we were plainly dealt with. To skin over a wound before it has been sufficiently probed and laid open, is the way to mortify the Part, and often Kills instead of Curing. When a Man's Fortune is sinking, he should be made sensible of his Condition; that if he despairs of stopping the Leak, he may quit the Bottom. The *English* and Confederates have lately received two Blows at Sea and in *Flanders*; which 'tis fear'd will take some time to Recover. These the *Gazetteer* runs over so lightly, and describes with such a handsome neglect, as if the Loss, if any, was inconsiderable.

That he does not deal clearly with us in this Case, I shall endeavour to shew, by bringing the forementioned Accidents under a short Review. And he it may not be improper to acquaint the Reader that I intend to keep within the Verge of the Confederacy, and to bring no evidence against the *Gazetteer*, but what is either drawn from himself, or from some other Authority which he is equally obliged to acknowledge. And if I mention any *French* Proof, it shall be when it agrees with his own.

I shall begin with the Loss of the *Straights-Fleet*; and here I shall,

1.st. Very briefly shew the *Gazetteer's* Account of this Accident to be perplexed and disagreeing with it self.

2.^{ly}. That 'tis imperfect, and far short of Matter of Fact.

1. His Account is dark and inconsistent. His Business here is to let us know the Fortune of the *English*. Now had he been disposed to inform us of what had passed, he would (after the List of those which escaped with the Admiral) have immediately mentioned the others which gained the Ports of *Spain*, and distinguished the *English* from the rest. This Account had been easy and intelligible. But his design it seems was not to be understood.

To this purpose he gives you the number of those with Admiral *Rooke*. Then tells you how many were missing; and at last sets down those which were got into *Cadiz* and *St. Lucar*, and intermixeth them with *Dutch*, *Danes*, &c. and with part of his latter List. And by this confused Relation, he has conveyed himself out of sight. But upon Inquiry I believe it will appear, he has lost himself as well as his Reader.

Let us compare his Lists from *Gazette* July 17th.

His first List contains those *English* Merchants Ships which were with Admiral *Rook*. The number of these is sixteen, beginning with the *George*, and ending with the *Fidelity*. His second List consists of those *English* Merchant-Men which were missing; this begins with the *Shandois* and ends with the *Mary Flower*, and in all makes twenty four Ships.

His third Account is of those Ships which escaped into *Cadiz* and *St. Lucar*, which though it does not reach the number of what was missing; yet it brings in nine *English*, seven in *Cadiz* and two in *St. Lucar*, which were unmentioned in his former Lists. Their names are,

The *Johanna* and *Anne*, the *Success* commanded by *Isaac Stoneham* and therefore different from the *Success* in the missing List, whose Master was *David Bishop*.

The *Sarab* and *Elizabeth*, the *Sarab*, *Manmaduke Rydon*; the *Sarab* commanded by *Lawson*; the *John* commanded by *Ware*; the *Tetuan Merchant*; Captain *Cooper* his Ship not named; the *Malaga Factor*, Cap. *Newland*; and therefore different from

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that Ship of the same Name in his second List, which was commanded by *Rich. Love*. Now where a Man pretends to be particular in naming the Ships which were safe, and those which are missing. One would think the joyning these two numbers should comprehend the whole Fleet: But besides that he is far short in the summ Total, as will appear by and by. There is an unusual Accident happened to the Computation; for he has brought in nine Merchant-men, seven to *Cadix* and two to *St. Lucar*, which were unmentioned in the former Lists. So that by his account we have nine Sail which were neither safe nor missing, neither in the Enemies Hands nor in their own, which I confess is something extraordinary.

I am now in the

Second Place to prove his Account far short of matter of Fact.

We must go back to his former Lists. The number with Admiral *Rooke* is sixteen, the List of those missing is twenty four; so that it seems the whole Fleet of *English* Merchant-Men bound (as himself tells us *Gaz. July 17.*) to *Smirna*, *Scanderon*, *Messina*, *Galipoli*, *Alicant*, *Cadix*, *St. Lucar*, *Venice*, *Tunis*, *Malaga* and *Legorne*, consisted but of Forty Sail. But this is a great mistake; for 'tis granted by all the Merchants of *London* (and by many of them too much felt) that the *English* when they fell in with the *French* at *Lagos Bay*, were about Eighty Sail Merchant-Men.

This number the *Gazetteer* ventures to abridge into Forty, to conceal the Loss of the rest. And here we may observe that the Fleet bound to *Smirna* consisted of eight *Dutch* and eleven *English*; the *Dutch* were all taken and destroyed at *Lagos*; and two of the *English* were then destroyed, and four since at *Gibraltar*, making above two thirds of the value of the eleven. The *Success* worth above 50000 *l.* was likewise burnt at *Lagos*. The *Gazetteer* owes the Misfortune at *Gibraltar* (and that at *Malaga*) but as for the rest he knows not of one *English*-man taken except the *Friendship*, a small Vessel of about 70 Tuns. (*Gaz. July 17.*) This Relation he afterwards repeats with more assurance. Of the *English* (says he) there is not one Ship taken, either Man of War or Merchant-man, except a small Vessel called the *Friendship*. (*Gaz.*

Aug. 3.) Now by this Account one would imagin all was well, but if we observe him a little closer, we shall find he is not so hardy as to affirm that none of the *English* were burnt or sunk at *Lagos Bay*. This he durst not say. Now if they are destroyed this way, they are as much lost as if they were taken, though not with the same Advantage to the Enemy: But the *Gazetteer* hoped to conceal the matter by saying they were not taken. And since the Confederacy is deeply concerned in this Misfortune, I shall just mention the whole from the *Dutch* Prints. The *Recueil Aug. 6th.* informs us that the *French* took two *Dutch* Men of War, one of 66, the other of 68 Guns, and burnt a rich Pinnace and an *English* Man of War of 56 Guns. Besides these the *French* took 25 Merchant-Men, and burnt 45, which in all make 74. All this was done at the Bay of *Lagos*. The same Intelligence (*Recueil Aug. 13.*) continues the Narration of this Misfortune, and says, That the *Sieur Coetlogon* burnt 4 *English* *Smirna* Ships and 1 *Dutch* Man at *Gibraltar*, and took 7; that Count *d'Essee* took 4 and burnt some; so that here are 16 more lost, which added to the former number of 74 makes 90, besides those burnt by Count *d'Essee*. And if the Ships destroyed at *Malaga* are not included, the Misfortune rises still higher.

Having shewn what an untoward Account the *Gazetteer* has given of the late great Battle in *Flanders*. Here if we enquire of the *Gazette* *July 27.* we shall find that the Enemy was beaten back in all their Attempts; And the advantage on the Confederate Side, till four in the Afternoon.

This account is contradicted by a Paper Publish'd by Authority, and called, a Relation of the Battle at *London*.

For here we are told, that though the Enemy had been beaten at the Left; 'They had nevertheless kept a part of the Village of *Winden*, and made themselves Masters of the Hedges on the Rising Ground, which laid the Flank of our Retrenchment open to them, &c. Now, this is a flat contradiction to the *Gazette*. For if the *French* kept part of the Village of *Winden*, and continued Possessed of a considerable Post, through which they broke into the Confederate Army, and

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forced them to quit their Camp, as this *Relation* affirms; then 'tis plain they were not Beaten back in all their Attempts as the *Gazette* pretends. So that we have two Relations, both Published by Order of the Court, directly clashing in their Narrative: Now he that can swallow contradictions, and believe an Evidence who convicts himself, may be a good Natured Man, but I'm sure can be no Wise one.

Farther, *Gazette* Aug. 3d. Tells us that when the Left-wing went off which stood after the Right was Routed; This Left, says the *Gazette*, *Retreated towards Lewe, without being Attacked by the French; who had already suffered so much that they were willing to part with us.* This story is not only Incredible in it self, but plainly contradicted by the *Relation* of the *Battle*, &c. which was Printed but a day or two before this *Gazette*, and about a Week after the first News of the Battle; so that there was time enough for a full information? This Print makes no scruple to say, that 'when the Left-wing were Order'd to retire to *Lewe*, The Enemy, whose Horse were drawn up in two Lines upon the Rising-Ground, adventur'd to Attack them in their Retreat. Now what is to be done in this case; Here are two *White-Hall* Papers both of them Positive and Peremptory in their Stories, and yet fall foul upon each other. The *Relation*, &c. Frankly owns that the Confederates were Attacked in their Retreat: The *Gazetteer* (I suppose) finding this *Relation* grated a little upon the Peoples Stomachs; tells us very roundly, that the *French* were willing to part with the Confederates, and let them retire without disturbance. Thus to please the People, the *Gazetteer* ventures upon a very desperate Expedient. For by contradicting a Paper which stands upon the same Authority with his own, he sinks the Credit of the Court, and brings a suspicion upon what he Writes himself. Well! When two Witnesses disagree in their Evidence, we are sure one of them must be in the wrong; and that the *Gazetteer* is out, will plainly appear, if we consider that when the same Party gives a different Account of any Disadvantage, we may be assured that Relation which makes the Misfortune greatest has most of Truth in it. For as a Man who trades upon Re-

putation, will not Magnifie his Losses beyond Reality for fear of being blown up. So a State Faction which is sunk in its proper Strength, and lives only upon Art, will be sure not to make things worse then they are. So that if at any time their Memories happen to fail them, or they presume upon the easiness of the Reader, or the greatness of a Misfortune makes them drop a Secret, and disorders them into contradictions; we are then to believe that Part of the Account which is least favourable to the Reporters, for no Man in his Wits will tell an untruth to his disadvantage. To apply this Remark, we may conclude the *Gazetteer* a Mis-representer; and that the Confederates were pursued, as the *Relation* of the *Battle*, &c. affirms. And that the *Relator* gives us the Truth, though not the whole Truth, will appear farther, if we observe,

2. The condition of both Armies, when the Confederates were said to be pursued. How things went, I shall describe from the *London Gazette* and *Relation* of, &c. above mentioned, which may be both drawn up by the same hand for ought I know. 'Tis certain they both come from *White-Hall*, and pass the Nation for Intelligence of equal Authority. The *Gazette* tells us in these Words: 'That the *French* broke into us (*i. e.* our Camp) at the Head of our Retrenchment, which our Men were no longer able to maintain: 'That the Enemies Numbers prevailed... 'That upon this occasion we were forced to remove and change the Form of our Lines of Horse, who were thereby put into disorder. The *English* Horse and Guards were sent for from the Left, but before they came up, the Enemy had poured in so many Squadrons, that they had neither Time nor Ground to put themselves into regular Lines. At length when it was found impossible to remedy this disorder, and the Enemy advancing with fresh Forces; The Foot of our Left, as also the Dragoons, &c. were ordered to Retire towards *Lewe*: The rest of the Army Retreated towards *Tirkmont*. Thus far the *Gazette*, the *Relation*, &c. gives much the same Account, only somewhat plainer. Particularly, It tells us, that the *French Cavalry* forced the Hanover, *Brandenburgh* and *Spanish* Troops to Retire; that

that is they Beat them. That to remedy this Disorder, part of the Left-wing was Ordered to Advance, but before they could Form themselves, the Dutch Horse Retired, and the Right-wing were forced to pass the River, and the English were quite Encompassed. And then it follows, *That the Left-wing were Order'd to Retire to Lewe, and that the General himself passed the Bridge at Neer-Helphen with great difficulty.*

And when Matters were come to this pass, when the French had Fought up to the Mouth of the Confederate Cannon, forced their Retrenchments, and broke into a Fortified Camp: When they were Superior in Number, Order and Success, and had Surmounted all the difficulties of the Enterprize: When the Hanover, Brandenburg, Spanish and Dutch Troops were Beaten; when the last reserve of English had neither Time nor Ground to draw up in, but were encompassed by the Enemy: In fine, when all the Nations were Broken and Routed, the Right-wing forced to fly through a River, and the Left Ordered to shift for themselves: When affairs were in this Posture, does any Person of common sense imagine the French would not push the Advantage and pursue the Confederates. Were they too Generous to set upon an Enemy, who was in no condition to Resist? Had they no inclination to Revenge the loss of their Friends? Were they afraid of making the Victory too Absolute? And of over-loading themselves with Glory and Spoil? Few Men one would think, would impose such stuff as this upon the Belief of the Nation. 'Tis true the Gazette was hard set, for all the Publick Accounts having own'd that the French forced the Camp at four in the Afternoon, and that the Confederates were Broken and Ruined from that time. The Gazetter was aware, that allowing a Conquering Army four hours of day to Trample and Slaughter in; must needs give the People a horrid notion of the Defeat. And therefore to prevent the Impressions of Truth, he denies what had been Publicly own'd before, contradicts the Paper Published by Authority, and that with such wretched incredible Reasons, as can't be put upon Men without the greatest affront to their understandings.

I shall go on with the Gazette to com-

pute the Loss of the Battle, which may be reduced to two Heads, the Men and the Baggage and Cannon.

1. With respect to the Men.

The first Gazette of July 27th. says, 'tis certain, *They have lost double the Number of Men we have.* The Gazette of Aug. 3^d. is still more hardy, and tells us that 'tis certain, *That our Loss is not so great as that at Steenkerk; and that the French according to their own Account had lost more than double the Number.* One would think by this Relation the French had Printed an Account of their Loss; but upon Enquiry we shall find no such Matter: For this very Gazette has the ill luck to tell us in the Paris Article of Aug. 2^d. that the List of the Killed and Wounded is not yet made Public.

What does the Gazetter mean then by their own Account? Why, he will inform you in another part of his Works.

The Gazette, July 31st. is clear in the Point. For there a nameless Captain who came Express about his own business, who neither saw the Fight himself, nor pretends to be informed by any who did. There this Gent. affirms that the Relation that was Printed at Lille (in Flanders) the Sunday after the Fight, owns they have lost 16000 Men.

Very well! I'm afraid this Relation will miscarry for want of a little Geography: For the Battle being fought upon the 29th of July, N. S. the Sunday after falls upon the 2^d. of Aug. At which very day the London Gazetter has the Misfortune to tell us, that *Then there was no List of the Killed or Wounded, Published at Paris.*

And can we imagin there should be a List Printed at Lille when there was none at Paris. Durst any Subject in Flanders Publish an Account of so great a Battle, without Authority and Instructions from the Court of France? Does any Government, much less the French allow so wild a Liberty as this? And as for the French King's leave, it could not be sent at the time the Capt. pretends. For the London Gazette Aug. 31. says, that M^r. D'Artagnan Arrived at Paris upon the 31. at night N. S. with the News of the Battle. By this Account the Journey from the Camp to Paris, which we may imagine, was made with speed, cost the Express 2 Nights and 2 Days, i. e. from Wednesday at Night till

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Friday at Night, for that was the 31. Now if the Court had been at *Paris*, and a dispatch immediately sent to the Governor of *Lille* to Publish the News; there would remain but 1 Day and 2 Summers Nights to perform the Journey and Print the Narrative; for from *Friday at Night* to *Sunday* is no longer, which makes the story impossible. Thus far the *London Gazette*, but by that of *Paris*, Aug. 8. We are assured that Mr. D' Artagnan did not Arrive at the French Court, which was then at *Marli* till Aug. 1. which if there is any degrees in impossibilities, makes the Relation still more incomprehensible. Besides, to what purpose was this Romantic haste? To none that I know of, except to oblige the *Lille Men* with a favour which it seems the *Parisians* were not vouchsafed, and to furnish out the Gazetteers Capt. for his Voyage to *England*. To proceed, the *Gazette* July 31. says, *We are assured that our Losses does not exceed 9 or 10000 Men, including the Prisoners and Wounded.* The Relation of the Battle, &c. which came out a day or two after seems to have none of the Gazetteers Assurance, but tells us, *That our Forces being not yet all of them come together, we can't give a certain Account what Loss we have had.* The *Gazette* Aug. 3. says the same thing, adding withal, this Remarkable Passage; *That it's certain our Loss is not so great as that at Steenkerk*; which according to the last Years *Gazettes*, did not amount to 3000 Men. *Gazette* Aug. 4. 1692. This is still more Mystical, therefore we must try if we can inform our selves other ways. Now, in order to the satisfying this Question. We must,

1. Know how strong the Confederates were before the Battle: How far they are, or expect to be Reinforced, and to what Number the Army will amount after the Reinforcement. These 3 things will give us a true State of the Loss. Now the *Gazette* Aug. 3. confesses, the Army when they fought, to be about 45000; which Expression ought rather to be interpreted above the Letter than otherwise; it being the interest of the Gazetteer after a Defeat, to diminish the Confederate Forces. However we will be so fair as to take him at his acknowledged Number of 45000.

The 2d. thing to be enquired, is the Number of the Recruits, which we may learn from the *Gazette* of July 27. in these

words, *Our Army will be speedily Reinforced with 25 Battalions, and 40 Squadrons, are with the Duke of Wittenbergh; be, which there are 30 Battalions at Leige.* The Gazetteer must mean that the Battalions at *Leige* were to make part of the Reinforcement, otherwise to which purpose were they mentioned? If this were not his meaning, he might as well have said, 'besides, the Reinforcements, which we expect from the D. of Wittenbergh; there are 30 Dutch Battalions in New *Battavia* in the East Indies; which though true, would be horribly impertinent. We may observe farther, that these Forces the *Gazette* mentions at *Leige*, were not long since Detached thither; Ten Battalions being sent but 8 days before the Fight. (*Relation of the Battle, &c.*) 'Tis no wonder therefore, if they should be drawn back after so great an Accident. And if this point were not sufficiently proved, Mr. Dyckvelt's Letter to the States General would put it beyond Dispute. This Gent. who had a Public Character in the Dutch Army, gives his Masters a short Account of the Action in a Letter of July 30, which is inserted in the *Slip* of Aug. 4. At the end of the Letter we have these words. *Our Army will be very Numerous in a short time; for besides 25 Battalions and 40 Squadrons, with which the D. of Wittenberg Forces the Lines, there are moreover 30 Battalions at Leige.*

Taking therefore these *Leige* Battalions into the Reinforcement, as we Evidently must; let us see what it will amount to. There are 25 and 30 Battalions, which make 55. Now reckoning 500 to a Battalion which is no extraordinary computation, and the Number will be 27500 Men. Add to these the 40 Squadrons of Horse at 150 in a Squadron, and the Cavalry makes 6000; which added to the former mounts the Reinforcement to 33500. If you please we will cut off 6500 of this Number, and State the Recruits but at 27000; and then the Reckoning will be made upon a low Foot. Having done this, let us see how Numerous the Confederates will be after the Reinforcement. For satisfaction in this Enquiry, I shall as formerly apply to the *London Gazette*. That of Aug. 3. Affirms that the Confederates after the D. of Wittenberg, &c. has joyned them, will have an Army of 50000 Men. Let us

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cast up the whole, The Confederates were 45000 before the Fight : They have, and expect a Reinforcement of 27000, which added to the other, makes 72000. After which Reinforcement, they pretend no higher then 50000 Men. Now if we subtract 50 out of 72 there remains 22, which Number contains the Loss of the Confederates. So that even by the Gazetteers Reckoning the Battle has cost the Confederates 22000 Men. This Account agrees with several Letters of good Intelligence from *Flanders*, and with the *Paris Gazette* which mentions the Killed and Wounded to amount to above 20000. To this the *Recueil a Dutch Print. Aug. 13.* adds 1500 Prisoners, of which 200 are Officers of note.

I mention the *Paris Gazette*, because it concurs with our Gazetteer. Besides, this *Gazette* is a Paper of Reputation, & is more relied on, even in the Confederacy itself than that of *London*. To give one instance, We may remember the last Summer, that the *Paris Gazette* gave us as fair an Account of their Loss at Sea, as we received at Home from Admiral *Russel's* Journal; as may be seen by comparing the two Papers. Now those who give a just Relation of their Misfortunes, can't in reason be suspected of Art when they Report any remarkable Success. In such cases there is scarce any temptation to strain Truth, for the naked representation of Fact is a sufficient Advantage. Indeed great Kings scorn to Embase their public Intelligence with such uncreditable Alloy. For in soft Language, to deceive and misrepresent, to Maim and Murther Truth, are mean and inglorious Practices. I wonder any thing that pretends to be a Government, can stoop so low. But we gain'd so much by Romancing in 88, that I'm afraid we shall never leave it. Then the *French League* and the *Impostor-Prince*, & the handful of *Irish*, who after they were routed and disbanded, were to Maffacre the whole Nation, *English* and *Dutch* Armies, and all: These and a great many other Bull-beggars worked beyond expectation in that *Annus Mirabilis*. But if they think to keep the People under the same Vassalage of belief, and always ready to swallow the same absurdities, I hope they may be mistaken. To return to our Gazetteer, some of whose scattered Sentences being tacked together, we see make it evident,

that the Confederates have Lost above 20000 Men. However, the Gazetteer gives us to understand, that 'tis certain our Loss is not so great as that at *Steenkerk*. Did we then in earnest lose 20000 Men at *Steenkerk*, and could we not find in our Hearts to own above 3000? This is a discovery would never have come out, had it not been upon this occasion. In short, either our Loss was greater at *Steenkerk* than in the late Battle, or it was not; If it was, then we may perceive what an exact History we had of that Action the last Year, if it was not, then this Summer's *Gazette* endeavours to impose very unfairly upon the Nation. Now 'tis pretty plain, the *London Gazette* did not give us much above a third part of the *Steenkerk* Misfortune, yet it was in reality far short of the present Accident. For I desire to know of the Gazetteer, whether more than one third of the Army was Engaged at *Steenkerk*? Did the Confederates then lose their Cannon and great part of their Baggage? Was the Generals Plate taken at *Steenkerk*, and his Tent left the D. of *Luxemburg* to write his Letters in? Did the whole Army go off Routed and broken into little Bodies at *Steenkerk*; or did Mr. *Harcourt* come in and Defeat several Thousands in their Retreat? But after all, 'Tis certain the French have Lost double the Number we have. *Gazette, Aug. 27.* Pray how is this certain? Did we remain upon the Field to count the Slain? No, we were forced to retire. Have we Mustered since the Battle? We don't pretend to this neither. I suppose because *Our Forces are not all of them come together.* (*Relation of the Battle, &c.*) Have we received an Account from the French? That cannot be; for this Gazetteer (*Aug. 3.*) tells you, They have Published none: And the *Paris Gazette* says the same. How then, are we certain. No doubt by Instinct, as we are certain of every Thing else. For I perceive the Gazetteer does not pretend to come by his knowledge the same way with other Mortals. Most People I believe would be so far from thinking the Gazetteers Relation Certain; that they would scarce imagin it possible. Indeed how should it? For the French were granted to be almost two to one. This gives them the Advantage of Fighting fresh Men, against those who were fatigued. Farther, they forced

forced the Camp, and had 3 or 4 almost unresisting hours to Slaughter in. And to compleat the Misfortune of the Confederates, several Thousands of them were set upon, and Perused into a River, by a fresh Enemy. (*Recueil Aug. 13.*) I shall now in the

Second place examin the *Gazetteers* Relation concerning the Cannon and Baggage, &c. and here the first *Gaz.* *Jul. 27.* lays nothing of the matter, which is a plain confession that all was lost (and thus we must construe the *Gazette* in like cases.) The *Gazetteer* was apprehensive of this Inference, and therefore in his next of *July 31.* he brings in his Captain who secures all into a Trifle. And since he has put this Captain upon the Nation for an Intelligencer, he must be answerable for him. Now this Gent. assures us, *That we have lost none of our great Cannon, but only 7 or 8 Field-Pieces.* I confess this looks so like a Jest to all Men who can distinguish between a Cannon and a Pistol; that I was sometime before I could believe the *Gazetteer* would put it upon us. I could not at first imagin he would give his Pass to such a ridiculous Story to travel the Nation: I was willing for the Credit of the *Gazette* to suppose an Error in the Press; and that instead of *we have lost none of our great Cannon, &c.* it should have been said, *we have saved none of our great Cannon, but 7 or 8 Field-Pieces.* That this was the true Reading I thought I had reason to conclude, both from particular Relations of this Circumstance, and from the general Issue of the Battle. However considering the *Gazetteers* custom, I believe the Print may be much more correct than the Story. Let us examin which way the Cannon could be saved; to bring the point to a short issue. If the Artillery was saved, it must be sent off either before, in, or after the Fight. That it was not sent away before the Fight is unquestionable; for would the Confederates part with their Cannon, when the French were in fight; when they expected an immediate Attack, and design'd to keep within their Intrenchments? Would they unfortify their Camp, and lay themselves open to the Enemy? We may as well suppose they would send away their Pikes and Musquets as their Cannon upon such an occasion. Farther,

to suppose the Artillery sent away during the Fight is as unaccountable as the former Scheme. For can we suppose they would part with their principal Defence at the time they were using it? We may as well imagin they detach'd half their Men, and chose to Fight with the Remainder. From hence it appears, that unless the Cannon was saved in the Retreat, we must give it for lost. Now I appeal to any one of common Sense whether this was not impossible, when the defeat was so entire, and the flight made with such haste and precipitation? Could the Horse lodge the Artillery in their Holsters, or did the Foot run away with it under their Armes, as *St. Dennis* is said to carry off his Head? I desire not to be misunderstood, I am far from being pleased with the Misfortune of any Party; I lament the loss of the English, and heartily wish we might have Peace and Justice, without the Expence of an ounce of Blood; but such a Reporter as the *Gazetteer* cannot be too much expos'd. To be short the Loss was so visible that the Dutch despairing to hide it, have frankly owned a great part of it in their *Recueil* of *Aug. 10.* where we are told, *That after the Camp was forced, the French took 60 Pieces of Cannon, and cut off 8 or 10 English Battalions who were posted to Guard it.* And their next *Recueil Aug. 13.* owns the losing of some Mortars. 'Tis now time to look after the Baggage if there is any. The *Gazette Aug. 31.* assures us *it was all saved, being sent away the day before the Fight.* Under-favour, not all sent away, for no doubt they left Ammunition to fight with; they left Provision and their Tents too, unless they intended never to eat or lodge there more. Now to put their Men, after they were fatigued with fighting and embarrassed with the Wounded, upon a March of several Miles for Lodging and Refreshment, is a strain of Discipline somewhat extraordinary. I think the *Gazetteer* is too free with the Confederates, for as he represents the matter, they seemed to despair at the approach of the Enemy, and resolved before hand to quit their Camp. But to say this is Injustice to the Confederates, who behaved themselves with Bravery and Resolution, and were far from making such an ignoble Provision as the *Gazetteer's* Account supposes.

This.

This Relation, together with that of Count Tilly's taking the *French* Baggage, 60 Pieces of Cannon, &c. was so superlatively Extravagant, that I thought it had been calculated only for the Meridian of *England*; and that the Gazetteer would never have sent it beyond Sea in his *French* Translation; but upon Enquiry I find he has courage in all Languages. I suppose he might present the Allies with this Narrative by way of Triumph, to show to what degree we may be practised upon, and how far he is Master of our Understandings.

But if we are thus far out of our Wits, he does unkindly to expose us in Foreign Countries, especially considering from what Quarter the Distemper began. Upon this occasion it may not be improper to observe one surprising Passage from the *Relation of the Battle*, &c. This Relator does not stick to affirm, *That we have lost some Standards and taken as many*. Taken as many! That considering the Event of the Day seems very strange; pray let us hear the *Holland* Prints in this Matter, for the *Dutch* are both well planted for Information, and without doubt inclined to do Right to their Allies and themselves; we have no reason therefore to suspect their Testimony to their own Disadvantage. Now they (*Recueil*, Aug. 13.) are so candid as to acknowledge that the Confederates had taken but 7 Standards and Colours, and lost above 80. The whole is thus, In the beginning of the Day, the Confederates are said to have taken about 26 Standards, &c. (which tho' far short of the number possessed by the Enemy) yet even these were all retained to the 7 abovenamed. And after they were lost, to what purpose should they be mentioned? This was so mean an Equivocation that the *Holland* Print was ashamed to use it. However it is the only shelter to which the *English* Relator can pretend; and thus we have taken as many Standards as we lost! That the *Dutch* should have so much more Modesty than we have! Into what declensions of Honour and Conscience are we fallen! Thus I have shewn what an Excellent Account of Fact we are likely to receive from the *London-Intelligencers*; I have shewn in what material Points the *Relation*, &c. and the *Gazetteer* clash with each other, how the latter contradicts himself and the *Confederate* Prints abroad, how he turns Defeats

into a kind of Victory, charges through Impossibilities, and even exceeds the Liberties of a Romance. These are blessed Memoirs to transcribe into History: Truth must be handed to Posterity in a noble Light at this rate, and the Chronicle obliged for ever. And if he treats us in this manner just at home, what Discoveries may we not expect from more distant Places? What admirable returns of News must we make from the *East* and *West Indies*, from *Mosco* and *Constantinople*? And can any *English* Man see his Country thus used without resentment? Is it not enough to have our Ships burnt and taken to a prodigious value, to loose our Trade by Sea and our Armies by Land, without being Banter'd into the Bargain? To bear us down that all these Accidents are insignificant, is like cutting a Mans Throat, and then swearing to him he ails nothing? To imagin such wretched Stories as these will pass Murther; is to treat the Nation with the utmost Scorn and Contempt, and in effect to proclaim them Fools in Print.

One would think the Gazetteer might have moved within a more moderate compass: Had he only flourish'd an Advantage and lessen'd a Misfortune: Had he called running away, *Retiring*, and broker, the loss by the Softness and Distance of his Style, this had not been so surprising; such strokes of Breeding and Rhetoric are expected from him. Farther, Had he publish'd the gaining a Penny, and concealed the loss of a Pound: Had his Expression been perplex'd upon occasion, and his Meaning mystical and two handed. This freedom might have been in some measure charg'd upon the present *Service*, and pleaded off by the privilege of an Heathen Oracle. But to make us believe we have no Sences; to run a Tilt at notorious Fact, and attempt the extinguishing the Sun, is too much in all Conscience.

I thought this Gent. had finished the Battle by his intermitting *Gazette* of Aug. 7. But I perceive I am mistaken, for Aug. 10. he invokes his Muse a fresh, and runs a great length of Poetry. I hope the Key I have given to interpret his flights, will make him better understood, and more admired for the future.

As for the other little News-Papers, they are below Notice, I shall therefore dismiss the Argument.

Aug. 1693.

T H E E N D.

Bought of Mr J. West, 2. Sept. 1693